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SILVER THREADS AMONG THE GOLD ; #0
The First 25 Years
of Community and Rural Development Programs /7

by
Donald L. Nelson. —
Joint Planning and Evaluation
Staff Paper Series Number 80-PPS-08
November 1980

Joint Planning and Evaluation Staff Paper

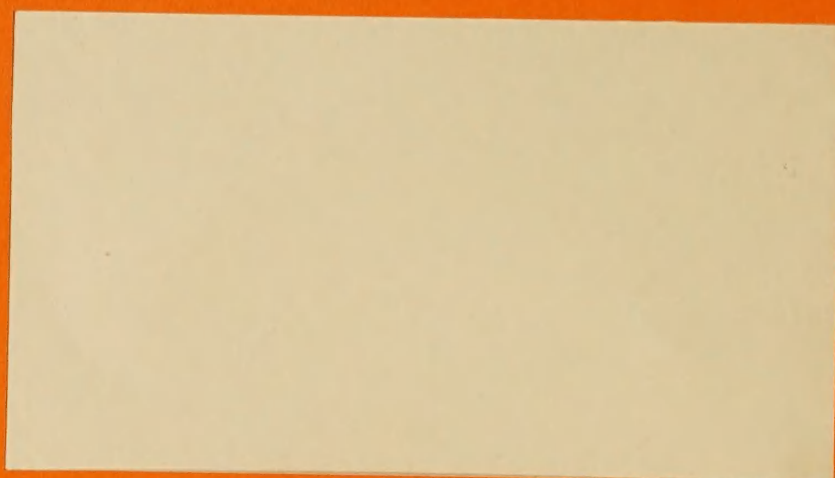
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Prepared as a part of a
Program Planning Staff Special Project,
"Assessment of the Role and Scope of the SEA
Community and Rural Development Program."

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Why Community and Rural Development?

"In Lincoln's day, only one out of every four Americans lived in a city; in our time, that ratio has been reversed. The long-time deterioration in rural fortunes is part of a larger story, one that encompasses the industrialization of American cities and the mechanization of American farms. These two strong winds have blown everything before them, ceaselessly driving rural wealth, resources and manpower into the urban maw."

--Quoted from "At the Crossroads, an Inquiry into Rural Post Offices and the Communities They Serve," by Richard J. Margolis, U.S. Postal Rate Commission, Washington, D.C., 1980, p. 4.

Why Science and Education Programs to Help People in Communities?

"More manhours and more dollars are spent on running community affairs than on any other peacetime activity in the United States. For the most part, this tremendous activity is undertaken in hamlet and metropolis alike without special training in the skills required to achieve cooperative action. The very behavior of those trying to achieve 'community action' often erects an impenetrable barrier between the followers and the leaders."

--From "Overcoming Resistance to Change," by Gordon Lippitt, in Selected Perspectives for Community and Resource Development, Agricultural Policy Institute, Raleigh, NC, API Series 39, April, 1969, p. 251.

Why a History of CRD Science and Education Programs?

"I know of no way of judging the future but by the past."

--Patrick Henry, Speech, Virginia Convention, March, 1775.

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The First 25 Years

Community and Rural Development (CRD) is "new" in terms of "major" science and education programs. Other major Extension programs (agriculture, home economics, and 4-H youth) got their start in 1910 or earlier. Thus, historically, CRD is new, having its origins in the relatively recent year of 1954. But it is not new when one thinks about 25-year reunions and silver anniversaries, both of which could have been commemorated for CRD programs in 1979, had anyone been so inclined.

CRD is also a major Extension program, according to organizational reporting and rhetoric. But it has never been allotted even 10 percent of science and education resources. Thus, the quotations around "major."

Whether CRD is new or old is a moot question.

Whether it is, was or will be a major science and education program is a debatable question of some importance, however. This paper could serve as a springboard for that debate.

Assumptions and Definitions

Extension Community and Rural Development programs will be emphasized.

The definition of Community and Rural Development (and there are many variations)^{1/} which will be used is:

A process whereby those in the community arrive at group decisions and take action to enhance the social and economic well being of the community.^{2/}

SEA-CRD programs are those science and education programs which are designed to help people in communities achieve their goals.

Community and Rural Development may be alluded to by the abbreviation CRD. Just as there are many variations of the definition of CRD, there are many variations of the name of the process and product. Thus, other terms and acronyms should be understood, for the purposes of this analysis, to represent essentially the same thing. Other, virtually interchangeable terms include Rural Development (RD), Rural Areas Development (RAD), Community Resource Development (CRD) and Community Development (CD).

To my knowledge, this is the first comprehensive attempt to chronicle the history of science and education CRD programs. (See Appendix.)

History of the CRD Program

I have not been able to find a great date, like July 4, 1776 is a great date, to seize upon and say: "This is when it all began." But we can consider some eras and dates when things happened which seem significant.

Before 1950

One could begin with a date like May 8, 1914 (Smith-Lever Act passed, formalizing cooperative agricultural extension). Or we could go farther back yet to the year of 1862, when President Lincoln signed both the Morrill Land Grant College and U.S. Department of Agriculture Acts. But it would require a mighty stretch of the imagination to say

that the framers of either of those Acts, momentous as they were, really had anything like CRD in mind.

The year I will choose as "first significant" is 1908. In that year, President Theodore Roosevelt appointed the American Country Life Commission. The Commission made a comprehensive study and offered recommendations that eventually led to substantial improvements in rural America. It is especially remembered for its role in (1) strengthening rural sociology, (2) creating the Extension Service and (3) improving financial institutions serving rural America.^{3/}

Other dates before 1950 which have significance for the theory and practice of CRD as we know it today are difficult to identify. One that has been suggested is 1918, when the West Virginia Extension Service published "Focusing on the Country Community."^{4/} Another early publication was Frank Farrington's Community Development: Making the Small Town a Better Place to Live and a Better Place in Which to do Business, published in 1915. Phifer et al say "The earliest community clubs under the sponsorship of the Cooperative Extension Service started in the South in the 1920s--probably in Mississippi. This movement for organized communities was directed at improving the welfare of the people not only in communities but also in the surrounding countryside."^{5/} There were other activities relating to community improvement in the '20s and '30s. The community aspects of Extension education got more impetus during and following World War II (Victory Garden Clubs, some of which evolved into community clubs). William Biddle began a Program of Community Studies and Dynamics at Earlham College, Richmond, IN in 1947.^{6/}

USDA Historian Gladys L. Baker says that the history and origins of the CRD program trace to the land use planning activities of the late '30s and early '40s. "The Extension Service, the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, the Tennessee Valley Authority and the Resettlement Administration were all involved in planning and actions which were in reality CD. The experimental counties and the intensive county plans and activities of this period set precedents," she says.

The '50s

Most people like to date CRD from 1954 or 1955. It was then that a rural development program was organized to bring the resources of the USDA, other Federal and State government agencies, and private resources to bear on areas with low rural incomes.

Program responsibility was assigned to Under Secretary of Agriculture True Morse, on April 28, 1955. The work was largely decentralized, with emphasis on State and county action in designated pilot counties and areas. Extension was the leader in program development, with the programs themselves carried out by a number of agencies.7/8/

At least some Extension system spokesmen were less than enamored of the new RD effort, however. One member of a USDA task force dealing with manpower, employment and migration questions--set up by Morse and chaired by Don Paarlberg--"vividly" remembers an early meeting of the group in 1954: "(The Federal Extension Service representative) told us that Extension simply would not be able to take part in such a program. He said that the county officials who paid part of the agents' salaries would not tolerate any work by the agents in programs that might lead to development of local nonfarm employment (competing with farm labor), or training programs for nonfarm employment, or even provision of information

about nonfarm jobs. And that was the end of Extension's participation in that task force!" he says, but adds: "Clearly, however, the message got through over time, and soon the Extension Service was involved with more enthusiasm."

Extension's basic legislation, the Smith-Lever Act, was revised in 1955 by adding a new Section 8. If there were "special circumstances in certain agricultural areas which cause such areas to be at a disadvantage insofar as agricultural development is concerned..." moneys could be appropriated "on the basis of special needs in such areas...to encourage complementary development essential to the welfare of such areas..." Extension involvement in agricultural areas determined to be in special need was to include "assistance and counseling to local groups in appraising resources for capability of improvements in agriculture or introduction of industry designed to supplement farm income (and) cooperation with other agencies and groups in furnishing all possible information as to existing employment opportunities..."

In April, 1958, the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy published "A Statement of Scope and Responsibility" of the Cooperative Extension Service. The "Scope" report indicated that "one of the consistent characteristics of Extension work has been the necessity to shift programs and methods to meet ever-changing demands." To respond to these changes, the report delineated nine areas of program emphasis for priority attention. "Community Improvement and Resource Development" was one of the areas.

ECOP appointed nine task forces, composed of Extension administrators and specialists, to prepare a more comprehensive report providing guidelines for each program area. The results of their efforts were

documented in "A Guide to Extension Programs for the Future," July, 1959.

Following the national committee activity, each State adapted the guidelines to its own structural needs and policies. Many States organized a CRD unit within Extension. Others assigned CRD responsibilities to staff of other units--primarily agricultural economics and sociology.^{9/}

Postscript to the '50s

The dawn of the new effort to revitalize depressed farming areas had barely brightened when storm clouds began to gather (a portent of things to come?).

Two agricultural economists evaluating the pilot effort, noting that the program "is barely 3 years old," said: "Funds...have been limited (Agriculture's appropriations were only \$2 million in 1957 and \$2.6 million in 1958)."^{10/}

They concluded their observations by saying, in sometimes fractured language, "The RD Program, as it now stands, still is not sufficiently comprehensive to make a really substantial impact on the problem with which it was set up to deal. A number of additional program tools must be made available. The program could more fully capitalize on the strong foundation of local interest and ability which, unfortunately, currently is being used to less than full advantage."^{11/}

Another ag economist wrote scathingly at the same time: "If a real surge forward is beginning to occur as a consequence of the RD Program it has escaped the attention of most observers."^{12/}

But an FES administrator, P. V. Kepner, was more sanguine: "It is apparent...that (this)...is not a 'program' in the sense that that term

currently is commonly used in agricultural circles. It is not an activity whose boundaries have been established by legislative action. It has not resulted in the establishment of any new organization or agency to supervise operations. It is not 'administered' by the Federal Government.^{13/} ...Perhaps the most significant attainment to date is one which is least susceptible to objective measurement. That is the discovery (or rediscovery) that when all interests of any area join together in an organized way in a common cause, accomplishments which the skeptics would say were impossible become realities."^{14/}

The '60s

The '50s produced a trickle of CRD activity. The '60s produced a flood, relatively speaking. By September, 1960, RD work was planned or underway in 262 counties in 30 States and Puerto Rico. Participants reported more than 2,000 projects to improve farms, build new industries and expand existing ones, help youngsters obtain job training, improve health and accomplish other aims.^{15/} There were many other indications that CRD would become a major program of the Nation in general and Extension in particular. There were several reasons for the outpouring.

General. A USDA publication of the mid-60s said: "In the 1950s, scientific and technological advances in agriculture brought a new level of abundance to America--and cost three million farmers their jobs."

In fact, one of the objectives of the RAD program was "to find new uses for cropland now producing surplus crops and to promote adjustments that will balance land use with national needs."

One photo--one which would send shudders through the USDA and the agricultural community today--was captioned: "on land that once added to the surplus corn inventory, a bulldozer breaks ground for a sand quarry..."^{16/}

The number of farms in the United States grew until the 1920s, than leveled off during the Great Depression and World War II. Following the War, however, farm numbers began to decline and farm population began to fall precipitously:

Millions of farms by selected years, U.S. ^{17/}		
1860-2	1920-6	1950-5
1880-4	1930-6	1960-4
1900-5.7	1940-6	1970-3
		1978-2.7

The USDA publication dramatized the population loss and its consequences in personal terms: "...a hired man had to move when his job was taken over by a pipeline milker and automatic barn cleaner...preemergence weedkiller replaced the sharecropper with a hoe...In towns and small cities with a farm-centered economy, a creeping paralysis enveloped Main Street. The shoestore owner had to dismiss his salesman because half of his customers had moved to the city in search of work. The hardware operator went bankrupt when his remaining customers started driving to a nearby city to shop in a modern, well-stocked hardware store. Construction came to a standstill. Tax bases began to deteriorate. With them went a decline in community facilities and services."^{18/}

The publication was describing the '50s in the past tense and implying that "a new force"--Rural Areas Development--had entered the scene and could be expected to help develop communities, create opportunities and improve the rural economy. However, the population decline and its concomitant consequences continued apace in the '60s, RAD or no RAD.

Another reason for the CRD interest was the newly-recognized problem of poverty amidst plenty. The President's National Advisory Commission on Rural Poverty said: "This report is about a problem which many in the United States do not realize exists. The problem is rural poverty. It affects some 14 million Americans. Rural poverty is so widespread, and so acute, as to be a national disgrace, and its consequences have swept into our cities, violently."^{19/}

The War on Poverty, including the war on rural poverty, was to lead to the Great Society envisioned by President Lyndon Johnson. Then-Secretary of Agriculture Orville Freeman wrote that the greatest need and the greatest opportunity for achieving the Great Society in rural America was not in farm programs but in nonfarm programs. He proposed that the Department of Agriculture should become the "Department of Food, Agriculture and Rural Affairs"^{20/} (something which has not yet happened).

It was also in the '60s that pollution and environmental degradation raised their ugly heads. Sometimes only community decisions were seen as able to provide answers to environmental problems, thereby throwing the educational ball into the CRD court again.

There was thus a host of compelling reasons for science and education to further the theory and practice of CRD:

- . Fewer people producing more food and fiber--more than we knew what to do with, in fact.
- . Lost farm jobs and poor people left behind.
- . The specters of poisoned lands, air and water.
- . Dying rural communities.

A popular response to the rural community dilemma was the theory that there is "strength through unity" (or numbers). The "area development" philosophy so predominant in the '60s is well-articulated in this statement by Daryl Hobbs, published in 1969:

"The ideas encompassed in the title of this paper ("Evaluation of Area Rural Development Programs") currently enjoy exceptional popularity. A colleague recently remarked that any proposal including the words 'multicounty,' 'area' and/or 'resource development' in any combination is certain to attract immediate attention; and usually the funds to begin a program. In recent years the multicounty approach to planning and development has been exemplified in the emergence of area vocational schools, area community colleges, area industrial development organizations, area extension districts, regional planning commissions, regional libraries and airports. The emergence of such multicounty, multicommunity-based institutions, organizations and facilities seems to be a function of a general recognition that communities are increasingly interdependent and that for many communities, especially in rural areas, there is an insufficient population and economic base to support a full range of services. Much of the area activity has, however, been stimulated and facilitated by various state and federal agencies and organizations since typically such multicounty areas do not represent political and legal entities."^{21/}

A chronology of significant dates for CRD in general in the '60s:

March 23, 1961--Rural Areas Development Board established in USDA.

May 1, 1961--Area Redevelopment Act; the Office of Rural Areas Development in the Department of Commerce named to coordinate its provisions.

June 16, 1961--Office of Rural Areas Development established in USDA.

February 21, 1962--RAD (local leader) committees had been established in 43 states, 1,012 counties. Technical Action Panels, with local Farmers Home Administration supervisors as chairmen, served as resources to these committees.

February 24, 1965--The Rural Community Development Service was created within USDA, to be under the supervision of the Assistant Secretary for Rural Development and Conservation; it superseded the Office of RAD (USDA version).

March 9, 1965--Appalachian Regional Development Act.

September 27, 1966--Executive Order 11306 created the National Advisory Commission on Rural Poverty.

November, 1966--TAPs organized in 50 States and Puerto Rico and 3,000 counties. The TAPs had 5,000 projects planned, 5,000 more implemented and 13,000 completed.

February 27, 1967--The field "outreach function" for USDA-RD programs was reassigned from RCDS to FmHA, by Secretary's Memorandum 1610.

September, 1967--Rural Poverty Commission published report, "The People Left Behind."

July, 1968--The number of county and area development committees had declined because of diminishing ARA-EDA assistance.

September 29, 1969--President appointed Task Force on Rural Development. The Task Force report, "A New Life for the Country," was published in March, 1970.

November 7, 1969--Secretary of Agriculture's Memorandum No. 1667, "Rural Development Program."

November 13, 1969--Council for Rural Affairs established by Executive Order 11493.

Extension and research. The list of significant events which shaped CRD programs within the USDA-Land Grant System in the '60s is deceptively short. Although legislative acts, administrative directives and task force reports were few, the new activities were numerous. It seemed to make little difference that CRD was ill-defined, that theories about "how to do it" were undeveloped or that the future of the program was uncertain. Extension began to staff up for the job and campus specialists and area agents fanned out across the States, seeking to help people in rural communities with their problems, whatever these might be.

Extension claimed 233 staff years were devoted to CRD in 1964. By the end of the decade, that number would quadruple.

A 1968 Extension study, "A People and a Spirit," said CRD programs needed "three types of personnel: (1) A generalist resident in the local community, (2) State Extension specialists at the University, and (3) part-time consultative help from specific disciplines."^{22/}

The same study said that "While the Cooperative Extension Service will continue to build upon its strengths in rural areas, there should be an increasing commitment in urban areas in the years ahead."^{23/}

The "Spirit" report recommended "a major expansion in program resources for CRD education. An expansion to nearly three times the present manpower levels is projected." That was a larger projected increase than for any other subject matter area in Extension.^{24/}

Moreover, three groups of key actors within the system seemed willing to support the growth of CRD. State Extension Directors foresaw heavy emphasis on work with "county and community organizations even if

funding is not increased." Given a hypothetical "significant increase" in funding, the Directors said they would expand CRD work even more.

Another surveyed group, total Extension staff, identified county and community organizations as the audience they would most heavily emphasize in the future. A survey of citizens familiar with Extension likewise recommended increased emphasis on CRD-type programs, but not as strongly as the other two groups. The "support groups" questioned "represent a biased viewpoint in terms of past exposure to traditional Extension programs," the report stated.^{25/}

A key recommendation of "A New Life for the Country" was "that Land Grant Colleges and Universities step up their commitment to direct more of their efforts toward the needs of countryside communities and rural places with special emphasis on meeting the informational and educational needs of low-income groups."^{26/}

The need for rural development research was also addressed in the report, through recommendations "that more research be directed toward vital questions where answers are needed to speed up rural development" (17 examples of kinds of research needed were listed)^{27/} and "that the Department of Agriculture work with the State Agricultural Experiment Stations in seeking substantially increased Hatch Act funds for human resources and community development research...at present only 1 1/2 percent of research goes toward human resources and community development."^{28/}

National leadership for the CRD program had resided in USDA from the beginning, but was vested in different offices and agencies. From the Under Secretary's office in 1955, it passed succeedingly to ORAD (1961) to RCDS (1965) to FmHA (1966). Secretary's Memo 1667 (1969)

made national leadership more diffuse and, implicitly if not explicitly, passed the state and local leadership role to Extension.

The memo said "The Assistant Secretary for Rural Development and Conservation represents the Secretary on RD matters and administers the program within the Department." A Departmental RD Committee was established, with the Assistant Secretary as chairman and administrators and deputies of five agencies (Forest Service, Soil Conservation Service, Farmers Home Administration, Federal Extension Service and Rural Electrification Administration) as members.

The memo further called for a USDA Committee for RD in each State, with the same five agencies (FS, SCS, FmHA, REA and the State Cooperative Extension Service) represented at the State level. The implicit leadership role for Extension was: "This group shall be convened by the Director of the State CES..." The memo stated that each Committee would elect its own officers; the Extension Director was named chairman in virtually every State. The door was left open to flexibility by saying that each Committee will "...develop its own operating procedures" and "enlarge its membership as it sees fit."^{29/}

No local USDA-land grant structure was specified, but most states organized county RD committees and most of these local committees were headed by county Extension directors/agents.

However, back at the national level, the leadership role was clearly not within Extension, as FES did not report to the Assistant Secretary for RD. Down through the years, to this day, and through various reorganizations and restructuring, Extension has never reported to the USDA leader of RD.

Chronology of significant dates for CRD extension and research in the '60s:

1962--First graduate degrees in Community Development offered by the University of Missouri and Southern Illinois University.

1962--Division of Rural Development and Public Affairs established in the Federal Extension Service, USDA.

January, 1963--ECOP Subcommittee on CRD and Public Affairs formed.

1965--Title I of the Higher Education Act sought to apply Extension functions to the solution of community problems.

July 12-30, 1965--First National Extension Workshop in CRD at Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI.

1967--ECOP Report on Community Resource Development.

November, 1968--"A People and a Spirit," a report of the Joint USDA-National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC) Study Committee.

January 13, 1969--Community Development Society formed, Columbia, MO.

As is apparent from this listing, at the close of the decade, Extension community developers had a defined program area, a professional organization, a representative staff in Washington, a voice in ECOP, the opportunity to study theory and some guidelines for accomplishing their task.

CRD was beginning to win recognition as one of the four major program areas in Extension (the others being agriculture, home economics and 4-H).

Postscript to the '60s

USDA Historian Jane Porter says:

"Manifestly, the (early) RD effort lacked budgetary support. Why? What are the future prospects? Part of the answer lies in relations with Congress. Wittingly or unwittingly, the Freeman Administration stepped on Congressional corns when it attempted to establish a 'supra-state bureaucracy' in the RCDS (set up in 1965). It then stepped on more corns when it attempted to get more control of Extension funds by transferring some of them from formula to discretionary handling. It is my understanding that it was the intention of the administration to direct these funds into RD in areas of low income and high unemployment.

"No program is going to get very far without being funded. It is unreasonable to expect one Extension program to develop by cannibalizing others. Nevertheless, Extension appears to have taken a leadership role in RD during the '50s and '60s, with some financial support during the '60s from the Department of Commerce. The cessation of this funding, plus the flop of the 'supra-state bureaucracy' (RCDS was abolished in 1970), plus the lack of confidence of the Freeman Administration in Extension, severely diminished the ability of Extension to function in a leadership role. The assignment of the responsibility for leadership in the field to the FmHA in 1967 resulted in the virtual withdrawal of Extension from the field until 1969 when the responsibility was formally assigned to Extension by a new Secretary of Agriculture (Clifford Hardin)."

FES' Kepner had observed proudly in 1958 that "(The new RD activity) has not resulted in the establishment of any new organization or agency to supervise operations. It is not 'administered' by the Federal Government." (See Postscript to the '50s section.) Perhaps the RCDS adventure therefore cooled Extension ardor just when it was about ready to burn brightly.

The '70s

The events of the '70s, at first glance, would seem to suggest that the promise of the '60s had been fulfilled, that is, that CRD had become a major policy goal of the Nation and a major program area in USDA-Land Grant extension and research.

At the beginning of the decade, Congress first mentioned RD in national legislation (1970) ^{30/} and passed the first specific RD legislation (1972).^{31/} Toward the end of the '70s, CRD had become a "major" program of Extension and the Extension and Research functions had been coordinated at the national level (following, by about 10 years, reorganization and restructuring in State Land-Grant institutions to accomplish essentially the same thing).^{32/}

President Carter's Policy on Small Community and Rural Development, announced in the waning days of the decade, would seem to be the capstone--the final authoritative statement--in a long series of statements and events shaping RD programs and policy.

General. Early in 1971, Deputy Under Secretary of RD Henry Ahlgren said "(RD) has essentially failed to this point. There have been isolated, sporadic instances of success, it's true. But the great goals of RD have not been achieved."

Why has it failed?, he asked rhetorically, and answered: "First because its time had not come." Later in his speech he said: "Now, however, the time for RD has arrived."^{33/}

At the end of the '70s, based upon what I have been able to find out, the questions and answers were more perplexing. Had CRD failed or had it succeeded: Had its time now come, had it come and gone, had it never come, or would it ever come?

Whatever the correct questions and whatever the appropriate answers thereto, there certainly were vastly different conditions and perceptions about CRD and rural America in 1969 and 1979. Consider the following:

1. Population turnaround. After decades of dizzying decline in population, the flight from rural America suddenly halted and population actually began to increase. The national rate of metropolitan population growth for 1970-78 was 6.1 percent; for nonmetropolitan areas in the same period it was 10.5 percent, a rate 70 percent greater than for urban areas. USDA Demographer Calvin Beale, probably the first to detect the turnaround, said "we got exactly what we were asking for (in the late '60s)"--balanced national growth.

2. More jobs. More jobs, especially more manufacturing jobs, was a goal of RD. Although manufacturing job growth was slow in all areas, nonmetro areas fared better than metros.

3. Income. Of the "People Left Behind" described in the 1967 Rural Poverty Commission report, 14 million lived in poverty. By 1975, the figure was down to 8.5 million.^{34/} A disproportionate share of all poor people still lived in rural areas in the late '70s, just as they did a decade earlier. But, as a White House staff member wrote, "unfortunately (rural poverty) is not a current-day glamour issue and therefore tends to receive less attention than it merits."^{35/}

4. Quality of life. For years, surveys have unfailingly shown that most people view rural areas as offering a better quality of life, in terms of reduced stress, congestion, pollution, crime, alienation and so on and, given a choice, most would opt to live in a "small town." Many people apparently began to turn the wish to fact in the '70s and

moved. And, where once economic pressures or incentives were proffered by the urban areas, Beale observed that many people now were moving for non-economic (therefore quality of life?) motives.

5. Energy. If the '60s were characterized by an environmental crisis, the '70s were characterized by an energy crisis. Since the energy crisis was essentially a liquid energy crisis and most liquid energy was used in transportation, a preliminary observation might be that people would again move back to urban areas so they would not have to travel long distances and therefore burn up scarce and expensive fuel. However, advances in communications and other technologies may make it less necessary to travel long distances. And, the notion that a person has to do more energy-consuming travel in a sparsely-populated, isolated rural area to get to and from widely-separated places may not be the case after all. In fact, the average nonmetro worker commutes 4.6 miles to his job; the metro dweller actually travels further: an average of 7.6 miles.^{36/} Another effect of the energy crisis was renewed rural activity in energy development activities in rural areas. Energy boom towns sprung up, as coal, oil, gas, biofuel and other energy resource development activities accelerated in rural areas. Thus, so far, there seems to be no evidence that people are fleeing the countryside because there is not enough energy (or because it is too costly).

6. Agricultural production. Food and fiber surpluses were so burdensome in the '60s that Secretary of Agriculture Freeman said that the greatest need and the greatest opportunity for achieving the Great Society in rural America was not in farm programs but in nonfarm programs. By the early '70s, however, Secretary of Agriculture Butz was saying just about the opposite. He favored the Department of

Agriculture to be strictly an agricultural production agency. Farm surpluses had disappeared and, in fact, there were worries about having enough reserves of some products. Farm prices were climbing, cropland was being hurried into production. Export demand was good and growing--Russia became a big grain customer--without farm exports, U.S. balance-of-payment problems would have been much worse than they were. The USDA, which short years earlier was encouraging idling of farmland or converting it to other uses, now had a policy favoring the retention of prime agricultural lands. Farm prosperity meant rural prosperity. Farm population losses slowed or stabilized.

From the foregoing discussion, it follows that virtually all the compelling reasons for science and education to further the theory and practice of CRD, which were enumerated for the '60s (see page 9), had been greatly altered or disappeared altogether by the end of the '70s. The changes were not uniformly distributed, to be sure:

- . There were still dying farm towns, as well as rural boom towns.
- . Some rural areas continued to lose jobs.
- . Rural poverty was a continuing problem in some locales.
- . Quality of life was still deteriorating in some nonmetro areas.
- . The long-run effect of the energy problem in rural areas was unknown.
- . Not all agricultural products were in heavy demand at high prices and, therefore, not all small communities prospered.

Chronology of significant dates for CRD in general in the '70s:

January 30, 1970--RCDS abolished by Secretary's Memorandum 1679.

November 30, 1970--Agricultural Act including Title IX--Rural Development.

1971--Senate Committee on Agriculture created a Subcommittee on Rural Development. Hubert Humphrey (MN) was first chairman, followed by Dick Clark (IA). Patrick Leahy (VT) is current chairman.

March 10, 1971--President Nixon proposed Rural Community Development through revenue sharing (to include Cooperative Extension work).

September 3, 1971--Rural Development Service established in USDA.

May, 1972--First USDA Honor Awards for Rural Community Development (awards program began 25 years earlier). Group awards went to the state RD committees of Arizona and North Carolina and the Appanoose, Iowa county RD committee. A total of nine county RD committees have been recognized since 1972; five state committee awards were made in the first three years, but none since (more than 15 individual Extension employees received RCD awards in the first eight years they were presented; two Extension groups have been honored in the RCD category).

August 30, 1972--Rural Development Act, including Title V--Rural Development and Small Farm Research and Extension.

1973--Twenty-two Congressmen met as an ad hoc group and formed the Congressional Rural Caucus. An approved Legislative Support Organization governed by an Executive Committee and employing a fulltime professional director, this informal bipartisan interest

group is concerned with the orderly growth and development of rural America. (CRC has 115 members in 1980, including one Senator; Wes Watkins (OK) is chairman.)

1973--Assistant Secretaries Working Group for RD created to carry out Section 603 of the RD Act of 1972.

June, 1973--"Community Improvement, the Rural Component," Report of the Young Executive Committee, USDA.

March 1, 1976--National Rural Center formed.

June, 1976--Congress directed the Postal Service to consider the effect on the community of any planned closing or consolidation of a small post office.

January 29-February 2, 1978--White House Conference on Balanced National Growth and Economic Development.

March 21, 1978--RDS merged into FmHA; RDS staff became RD Policy Management and Coordination group.

October 2, 1978--First White House RD Initiative (on health) announced. Other initiatives followed: water and sewer (December 1, 1978), communications (February, 1979), energy (May 4, 1979) and transportation (June 19, 1979).

March 13, 1979--State Policy Coordination and Administration Committee created by Secretary's Memorandum 1977.

March 21, 1979--Statement on RD, Secretary's Memorandum 1979 (replaced Memo 1667 and all supplements).

December 20, 1979--Carter Administration Small Community and Rural Development Policy.

Significant dates for CRD extension and research in the '70s:

February 18, 1970--The North Central Regional Extension CRD Committee was formed. Similar committees were formed in the other three Extension regions within the next 18 months. The committees were sponsored by the Farm Foundation at the request of regional Extension Director associations.

July 1, 1971--The first Regional Rural Development Center was established at Iowa State University for the North Central Region. Subsequently, three more were established: Northeast (at Cornell University, New York), Western (Oregon State University) and Southern (Mississippi State University). These were established by the directors of the State Extension Services and Experiment Stations in each region and are funded by the States, Title V of the RD Act, the Hatch Act and other sources. All have directors and coordinate and carry out region-wide extension and research CRD programs.

1972--Congress earmarked \$1 million under the Smith-Lever Act 3(d) formula for RD (in 1973, this was increased to \$2 million, but \$1 million was impounded); funding was \$1 million annually in each of the fiscal years 1974 through 1979; in FY 80 it was 0.

1974--Funding of Title V of the Rural Development Act was authorized for up to \$10 million for Fiscal Year 1974, \$15 million for FY 75 and \$20 million for FY 76. Actual funding was \$3 million for each year in FY 74 through 76 (\$1.5 million Extension, \$1.5 million Research).

April 5, 1976--Authorization for Title V was extended for FY 77 and funded at the same level and with the same Extension-Research split as for FY 74-76.

December, 1976--"Extension Education in Community Development"--ECOP Subcommittee on CRD and Public Affairs report authorized by ECOP.

November 19, 1977--National Rural Center evaluation of Title V of the RD Act of 1972.

1978--Title V was extended by Congress again for FY 78-79, with \$4 million appropriated (\$2.5 million Extension, \$1.5 million Research). (It was also funded at the same level and same split for FY 80, even though Title V had not been authorized beyond FY 79.)

January 24, 1978--Science and Education Administration created in USDA from Agricultural Research Service, Cooperative State Research Service, Extension Service and National Agricultural Library, with new program responsibilities as spelled out in the National Research, Extension and Teaching Act of 1977 (Title XIV).

Into the '80s

This is a "contemporary history." One noted contemporary historian, Winston Churchill, wrote:

"History...we are told is mainly the record of the crimes, follies, and miseries of mankind."^{37/}

I certainly hope there is no record of crime in this history. There undoubtedly have been some follies, however. And the whole idea of

CRD science and education programs is to help minister to the "miseries of mankind"--at least that portion of mankind living in rural America.

What miseries await U.S. communities of the future and how will the Science and Education Administration minister to them?

Hopefully we will not be ignorant of the CRD experiences and lessons, including the flops and the follies, of the '50s, '60s and '70s as we decide how to act in the '80s and beyond. Some of the issues and concerns for the future suggested by the past include:

...Questions concerning rural communities:

1. Are the basic CRD problems still ones of decline, stagnation and slow death--of the "ceaselessly driving (of) wealth, resources and manpower into the urban maw"? Or will they essentially be the opposite--how to manage exploitation, explosive growth and renewed vigor?

2. Is the rural-urban population turnaround a lasting phenomenon or a fleeting anomaly? Put another way, is it, in Margolis' words, "much too early to tell whether the statistics represent an authentic rural sunrise or merely a false dawn"?^{38/}

3. There are still many "People Left Behind" in rural America. Should they be rescued? How?

4. Is agriculture still basic in rural America? What will agricultural development be like and what will it mean to CRD?

5. What will be the effect of the energy shortage on rural communities? On the other hand, what will be the effect of increased energy development in rural areas?

6. Environmental concerns popped up in the '60s...the energy crisis caught us unaware in the '70s. Will there be unforeseen, similar shocks affecting communities and rural America in the '80s?

...Questions concerning USDA:

1. Secretary Freeman said that the greatest opportunity for overcoming rural poverty was not in farm programs but in nonfarm programs (presumably, including CRD). Is that an outdated concept? Or would that still be a wise long-term strategy?

2. Is there a "lead agency" for CRD? Which agency is it?^{39/}
Should there be one?

...Questions concerning SEA:

1. Is CRD a major SEA program or not? Should it be? How could it be?

2. The Extension "Spirit" report projected a "major expansion" in Extension CRD to "three times the present manpower levels." If the figures are comparable (and I'm not sure that they are), not only was there no expansion between 1966 and 1979, there may have been an actual decrease. Is it now time to expand? How might that be accomplished?

3. The 1970 Presidential Task Force report, "A New Life for the Country" called for more CRD research, noting that "only 1 1/2 percent of (Experiment Station) research goes toward human resources and community development." The comparable 1979 figure was about 4.5 percent.^{40/}
Is that about right?

4. How is the CRD program area, with about 7.5 percent of total Extension resources and 4.5 percent of total Experiment Station resources, to compete with the other Extension and Research program

areas? (Extension's three other program areas, agriculture and natural resources, home economics and nutrition, and 4-H and other youth work, had, respectively, about 38.5, 28 and 26 percent of the resources in 1979.^{41/})

5. Do we now really have good "how-to-do-it" CRD theories?

6. Whatever happened to the area (multicounty) approach to CRD?

Is the fatal flaw, as Hobbs hinted, that "...typically (such) multicounty areas do not represent political and legal entities"?

6. Whatever happened to urban development? (The ECOP "Spirit" report of 1968 recommended "an increasing commitment in urban areas...")

7. What will be the effects of the President's Small Community and Rural Development Policy?^{42/} Specifically for SEA, what will be the effects of the recommendations to:

a. ask Congress to create the position of Under Secretary of Agriculture for Small Community and Rural Development?

b. place renewed emphasis on the RD Working Group, to be composed of "principal federal program managers" from 15 different federal departments and agencies? (The Working Group Task Force on Capacity Building is chaired by SEA.)

c. invite Governors to establish State RD Councils?

8. Whither Title V? Nearly everyone seems to agree that the results of the research and extension programs carried out with modest funding under this legislation have been good. But, at this writing, the whole program is in limbo, its future authorization and funding levels, if any, in doubt.^{43/}

This list has some agonizing questions, for which there are probably only agonizing answers. But if the past is prologue, the

play will go on. How will we act?

We might do worse than to turn for guidance to my favorite contemporary historian, Churchill. Writing of the need to try to stop shipments of iron ore from neutral Sweden through occupied Norway to enemy Germany, he concluded his analysis with:

"Of all this history must be the judge. We now face events."^{44/}

Footnotes

- 1/ Christenson and Robinson reviewed journal literature and collated the definitions of community development. They found no fewer than 22 definitions and then, "Based on an analysis of key aspects of these diverse definitions, we have come to define community development as: (1) a group of people (2) in a community (3) reaching a decision (4) to initiate a social action process (i.e., planned intervention) (5) to change (6) their economic, social, cultural, or environmental situation." Christenson, James A. and Jerry W. Robinson, Jr., editors, Community Development in America, the Iowa State University Press, Ames, IA, 1980, pp. 8-12.
- 2/ "ECOP Report, Community Resource Development," 1967, p. 9.
- 3/ Daft, Lynn M., "The Rural Poverty Commission: Ten Years Later," in "Rural Development Perspectives," U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Washington, D.C., March, 1980, p. 4.
- 4/ Unger, David G., "Extension's Program in Community Development--a Look at the Future," in "1978 National Community Development Workshop," Cooperative Extension Service, Iowa State Univ., Ames, IA 50011, June, 1978, p. 3.
- 5/ Christenson and Robinson, pp. 21-2.
- 6/ Christenson and Robinson, pp. 25, 146.
- 7/ Rasmussen, W. R., "Historical Notes on Agricultural Programs to Alleviate Rural Poverty," unpublished paper, July 2, 1965, pp. 31-2.
- 8/ In that same year, 1955, the National University Extension Association (NUEA) established a Division of Community Development, according to Christenson and Robinson, p. 23.

- 9/ Bottum, John S., letter to Suzan Craik, Dec. 12, 1979.
- 10/ Ruttan, V. W. and J. K. McDermott, "How Effective is Rural Development?", Farm Policy Forum, The Iowa State College Press, Ames Iowa, Vol. 11, No. 1, Summer, 1958, p. 25.
- 11/ Ruttan and McDermott, p. 31.
- 12/ Malone, Carl, "Summarizing the Rural Development Story," Farm Policy Forum, p. 35.
- 13/ Kepner, P. V., "How Rural Development Operates," Farm Policy Forum, p. 14.
- 14/ Kepner, p. 18.
- 15/ Rasmussen, p. 32.
- 16/ "Rural Areas Development at Work," USDA, Office of Information, PA No. 625, Sept., 1964.
- 17/ "A Chronological View of Farm Policy," unpublished paper, June 11, 1979.
- 18/ "RAD at Work."
- 19/ "The People Left Behind," a report by the President's National Advisory Commission on Rural Poverty, Sept., 1967, p. ix.
- 20/ "The Department of Agriculture During the Administration of President Lyndon B. Johnson, Nov., 1963-Jan., 1969," Vol. I., unpublished paper, p. 32.
- 21/ Hobbs, Daryl, "Evaluation of Area Rural Development Programs," in Selected Perspectives for CRD, Agricultural Policy Institute, School of Agriculture and Life Sciences, North Carolina State Univ., Raleigh, API Series 39, April, 1969, p. 313.
- 22/ "A People and a Spirit," a report of the Joint USDA-NASULGC Extension Study Committee, Colorado State Univ., Fort Collins, Nov., 1968, p. 54.

- 23/ "A People and a Spirit," p. 53.
- 24/ "A People and a Spirit," p. 55.
- 25/ "A People and a Spirit," p. 32.
- 26/ "A New Life for the Country," the report of the President's Task Force on Rural Development, March, 1970, p. 31.
- 27/ "A New Life," p. 47.
- 28/ "A New Life," p. 48.
- 29/ Secretary's Memorandum No. 1667, "Rural Development Program," USDA Office of the Secretary, Nov. 7, 1969.
- 30/ "Title IX--Rural Development" of the Agricultural Act of 1970 (Sect. 901(a)).
- 31/ The Rural Development Act of 1972.
- 32/ Unger, p. 4.
- 33/ Ahlgren, Henry L., "The Road Ahead in Rural Development," remarks at the National Workshop for CRD Workers, Washington, D.C., March 11, 1971.
- 34/ "Rural Development Perspectives," USDA, Washington, D.C., March, 1980, p. 51.
- 35/ Daft, p. 6.
- 36/ Bowles, Gladys K. and Calvin L. Beale, "Community and Migration Status in Nonmetro Areas," Agricultural Economics Research, Vol. 32, No. 3, ESCS, USDA, July, 1980, Table 10, p. 18.
- 37/ Churchill, Winston S., The Second World War--The Gathering Storm, Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1948, p. 347.
- 38/ Margolis, Richard J., "At the Crossroads, an Inquiry into Rural Post Offices and the Communities They Serve," U.S. Postal Rate Commission, Washington, D.C., 1980, p. 5.

39/ "A Brief History of FmHA," U.S. Department of Agriculture, Farmers Home Administration, June, 1980, on page 1, says: "FmHA's existing system of people-to-people contact across the country has established it as the 'lead' agency for rural development."

40/ "1979-84 Cycle for Projecting and Analyzing Research Program Adjustments with Historical Trends and Comparisons," a Report to the Joint Council on Food and Agricultural Sciences, July, 1980, Table 5.

41/ "Evaluation of Economic and Social Consequences of Cooperative Extension Programs," U.S. Department of Agriculture, Science and Education Administration-Extension, Washington, D.C., Jan., 1980, p. 28.

42/ The RD Policy Act, signed by President Carter on Sept. 24, 1980, legitimizes the Policy statement. On Oct. 14, 1980, Secretary of Agriculture's Memorandum 2027 established the National Advisory Council on Small Community and Rural Development, the Secretary to appoint the Chairman; the Assistant Secretary for RD to be the Vice Chairman and a representative of FmHA to be the Executive Secretary.

43/ The authorization for Title V funding was extended for FY 80 and 81 by the RD Policy Act of 1980. FY 80 funding had been previously granted, but the House and Senate Appropriations Committees recommended that Title V funding for FY 81 be included as formula funding under the Smith-Lever and Hatch (Extension and Research) Acts. Leaders of SEA, ESCS, FS and the Office of International Scientific and Technical Cooperation on Oct. 1, 1980 recommended revisions in Title XIV of the Agricultural Act of 1977 to Secretary Bergland. Included was a subtitle revising Title V, with the reservation that, if a similar pending revision was passed by the Congress, the revising subtitle would be withdrawn.

44/ Churchill, p. 547.

Appendix

Other writing on CRD history:

1. Chapter 2 of Christenson and Robinson (see footnote 1 for complete citation) is entitled "History of Community Development in America" by Bryan M. Phifer with E. Frederick List and Boyd Faulkner. It "deals with the emerging field of community development from early self-help efforts through community organization and social work thrusts to the field as we know it today." The writers identify the 1908 Country Life Commission activities as being at "the roots of community development." Major chapter subheadings deal with such topics as the role of educational associations, early university efforts, community-based efforts, CD literature, alternative approaches, urban development, federal government thrusts and the Community Development Society. The chapter concludes with the statement: "The Challenge Ahead: Community development has emerged as a vital force in democratic participation in community self-help during the last fifty years. During this time it has moved from primary emphasis on economic development in its embryonic years to a holistic approach toward community capacity building."
2. The Appendix to "Rural Development Goals," Second Annual Report of the Secretary of Agriculture to the Congress (Pursuant to Title VI, Sect. 603(b) of the Rural Development Act of 1972), is titled "Historical Review of Federal Actions Relating to Development." The history traces (principally) Federal legislation relating to population, employment, income, housing and community facilities and services and ranges from the Northwest Ordinance of 1784 to the Health Education

Maintenance Organization Act of 1973. The introductory paragraph of the Appendix states: "The history...illustrates the absence of explicitly stated and understood national RD goals. On the other hand, the thrust of the legislation operative at any given time provides insight into the goals which were probably implicit in the legislative provision."

